

WASHINGTON – **Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01)** released the following statement after House action on trade today:

“When I was asked for my vote by Julie Kushner, the Director of the United Auto Workers Region 9A in Connecticut, and the rest of UAW, they were clear about the impact this would have on American automobile manufacturers. As she said: ‘The Korea Free Trade Agreement will go a long way in eliminating the automotive trade gap that currently exists between the United States and South Korea. The agreement will lead to an improved economic relationship with South Korea, while enforcing safeguards aimed at protecting the American auto industry.’

“This was further confirmed by Zeke Zalaski, the President of UAW Local 712, who spoke for himself and the locals at Associated Spring in Bristol, when he said that ‘This trade agreement makes sense for the auto industry from both a national and local perspective. Connecticut is home to a number of small automotive industry suppliers, such as Associated Spring, who will benefit tremendously from the shrinking of the automotive trade gap with South Korea. This agreement will provide a major boost to automobile-related manufacturing here in Connecticut’

“Over the past few months, local manufacturers, such as DYMAX of Torrington and Ahlstrom Nonwovens of Windsor Locks, have made it clear that, on balance, the Panama and Korea free trade agreements are a plus for Connecticut. However, despite improvements, work still needs to be done on the Colombia free trade agreement, especially with continued atrocities perpetrated against labor leaders.

“Passage of these free trade agreements would not have been possible without bipartisan action to renew a strengthened Trade Adjustment Assistance program. TAA provides essential retraining for our workforce so they can stay competitive in the global marketplace.

“The real agenda, however, remains immediate passage of the china currency legislation to give our manufacturers a fair shot and a jobs agenda to put America back to work. The 14 million unemployed Americans deserve nothing less.”

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